British Columbia Provincial Museum

HANDBOOK No. 1

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FIFTY EDIBLE PLANTS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

By G. A. HARDY

Victoria, B.C. December, 1942

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FOREWORD

This booklet is the first of a new series to be published from time to time by the Provincial Museum and to be known as the "Handbook Series." These publications will deal with various groups of the flora and fauna of the Province of British Columbia and may also include material relating to the native Indian tribes. The new series is intended to provide an outlet for articles which, because of their brevity or popular style, do not fall within the scope of the "Occasional Paper Series" or of the Annual Report. It is felt that the publication of these booklets will satisfy a need on the part of students and the general public for a source of information concerning the natural history and anthropology of this Province.

At the present time it seems appropriate that this booklet "Fifty edible plants of British Columbia" by G. A. Hardy, Botanist of the Provincial Museum, should be Number 1 of the new series.

G. Clifford Carl,
Director,
Provincial Museum of
Natural History and
Anthropology,
Victoria, B. C.

December 1, 1942.

Fifty Edible Plants of British Columbia

by

George A. Hardy

INTRODUCTION.--Plants play a vital role in the affairs of mankind. Food ranks first in human economy; it is therefore of some interest to note what contribution the flora of British Columbia has made toward this end.

An inquiry into the subject shows that a surprisingly large number of our plants have been used as a source of food in one way or another, and a thorough knowledge of their potentialities in this direction can mean many enjoyable adjuncts to our table, if not a means of supplementing present supplies. To airmen and others who may become stranded in regions far from inhabited areas such a knowledge may mean the difference between life and death.

Consequently in response to requests received at the Museum for information on the food plants of British Columbia a selection of fifty has been made from those most commonly met with and which are native or naturalized as distinct from cultivated forms. Brief descriptions and notes on the food possibilities of these plants are presented on the following pages.

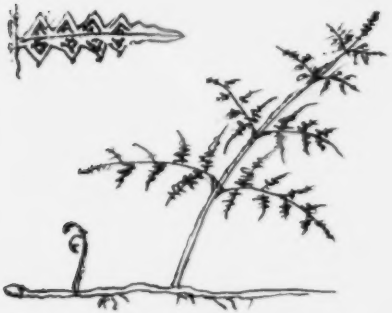
STYLE AND ARRANGEMENT.--Brevity compatible with accuracy has been the aim in this brochure. To this

end telegraphic style has been adopted in the notes dealing with the description and habitat and range of each species. Accompanying each description is a sketch of the plant in question in which the essential characters are stressed rather than completeness in unimportant detail. The sequence of families is according to Henry's "Flora of Southern British Columbia." Common names are placed in alphabetical order in each family and an index is added for easy reference to any particular species.

IDENTIFICATION.--Identification of plants by untrained persons is nearly always difficult but too much emphasis cannot be placed on the importance of correct identification before using any plant as food, as occasionally a poisonous or harmful species may be confused with an edible one. It is suggested therefore that if any doubt exists as to the identity of a plant, specimens should be submitted to some authority. The Provincial Museum will gladly assist in examining specimens and in supplying additional information.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.--Full use has been made of available literature on the subject. A short selection of the more accessible works is appended for those wishing further details.

POLYPODIACEAE. Fern Family



1. BRACKEN FERN Pteris aquilina v. languinosa Bong.

Description. Long underground rootstock. Frond feather-like, broadly triangular in outline. Spore bearing sections smooth with turned in margins. The ripe spore cells give a brown, velvety appearance on under surface. Terminal pinnae entire.

Habitat and Range. Woods, roadsides and old clearings. Throughout the Province in the more humid regions; reaching its best development in the coastal forests.

Food Uses. The roots may be roasted, powdered and peeled; the inner starchy substance may then be eaten or ground and used as flour. The young shoots gathered in the spring just as they are uncurling make a substitute for asparagus after the base of the shoot and the curled top are discarded.

POLYPODIACEAE. Fern Family

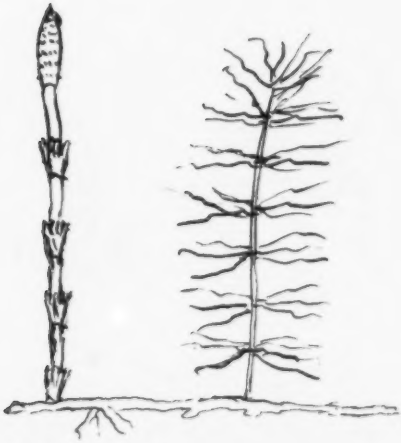
2. SWORD FERN Polystichum munitum (Kaulf) Presl.

Description. Tufted. Fronds stiff, regularly feather-like, tapering to a point above, abruptly below; stem brown-scaly, 1 to 4 feet in length, 2 to 6 inches wide. Small sections entire with sharply toothed margins, narrow, tip sharp pointed.

Habitat and Range. In clumps in shady coniferous woods, throughout the coastal region. Abundant.

Food Uses. The rootstock may be roasted. It is said to be both tasty and nutritious.

EQUISETACEAE. Horsetail Family.



3. HORSETAIL Equisetum species.

Description. Plants usually of two distinct types; the fertile are plain, jointed, straight stems ending in a spore-bearing cap on tip; and the infertile or vegetative shoots which are branched in a series of whorls like a miniature pine tree.

Habitat and Range. Low ground, borders of lakes and streams, all over the Province.

Food Uses. The young shoots as they appear above ground, stripped of their outer cortex may be eaten raw. They have a sweetish taste.

4. JUNIPER Juniperus species.

Description. Trees or shrubs with pointed or scale like leaves. The shrubby type often form extensive mats, radiating from the central root. The fruit is a small blue berry containing large and hard seeds.

Habitat and Range. Usually exposed, dry or rocky places. Throughout the Province, from the sea coast to the mountain tops, often erratic in occurrence.

Food Uses. The berries may be used either raw or dried and ground and prepared as a mush or cake. A decoction of dried ripe berries has been used as a tea or coffee. An extract of the fresh berries can be used with bread in place of butter. Its modern use is more as a flavouring for gin and other cordials.

PINACEAE. Pine Family

5. LODGEPOLE PINE Pinus contorta Dougl.

Description. Long needle-like leaves in groups of two. Cones small with spine on back of each scale, persistent on the tree.

Habitat and Range. On the coast may be very scrubby in growth if on rocks, or a tall well-shaped tree with a rounded pyramidal outline in good soil. In the interior, forms extensive pure stand forests.

Food Uses. The sap wood between the bark and the wood of young trees may be scraped off and eaten fresh or dried in the sun for future use.

PINACEAE. Pine Family

6. WESTERN YELLOW PINE Pinus ponderosa Dougl.

Description. Very long needles in groups of threes. Cones large.

Habitat and Range. In the dry belt zone of the interior occurring in open park-like stands.

Food Uses. The seed is said to be pleasant to the taste. May be crushed or ground and then made into a bread or biscuit with the addition of the sunflower seed. Resembles the flavour of hazelnuts.

TYPHACEAE. Cat-tail Family

7. CAT-TAIL Typha latifolia L.

Description. A tall plant with broad sword-like leaves and flowering top resembling a compact bottle brush or cat's tail.

Habitat and Range. In shallow water on margins of lakes and ponds throughout the Province.

Food Uses. The young shoot should be stripped of its outer sheathing layers; the white tender part within makes a pleasant food. The central part of the rootstock may be dried, ground and made into meal.

LILIACEAE. Lily Family

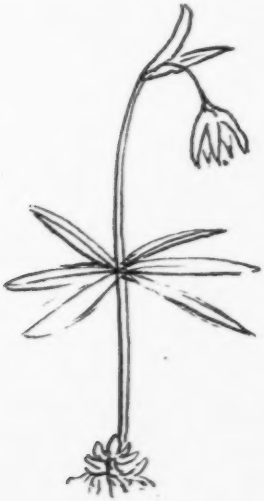
8. CAMAS Camassia quamash (Pursh.) Greene.

Description. Broad, grass-like leaves. Flowers blue, large and showy in loose terminal heads resembling the garden hyacinth.

Habitat and Range. Rich meadows and grassy flats. Southern British Columbia in the humid areas, chiefly in the western part of the Province.

Food Uses. The underground bulb roasted makes a delicious repast. In digging care must be taken not to include bulbs of the Poison Camas which has a loose head of tiny creamy-white flowers making distinction easy only in the flower stage.

LILIACEAE. Lily Family



9. CHOCOLATE LILY Fritillaria lanceolata Pursh.

Description. Root or bulb resembles a small mass of rice grains. Leaves in whorls. Flowers, chocolate colour, nodding.

Habitat and Range. Open woods and thickets near the coast.

Food Uses. The roots or bulbs cooked make a palatable and nutritious food.

10. WILD ONION Allium species

Description. Pale blue or lavender with a pink tinge; sometimes white flowers in a head on a leaf-like stem, appearing after the grass-like leaves have died down.

Habitat and Range. Dry rocky or sandy benches and slopes in open woods or brush land. In all parts of the Province.

Food Uses. The bulbs may be either pickled or parboiled to get rid of the very strong taste. Excellent for flavouring soups and stews. Onions of all kinds are a very healthful food.

11. ASPEN Populus tremuloides Michx.

Description. A small tree with smooth green or greenish bark with a bloom upon it. Numerous small leaves easily agitated by the wind.

Habitat and Range. On bluffs and open slopes and swales throughout the Province.

Food Uses. The inner bark or sap wood scraped off with a knife may be eaten raw.

URTICACEAE. Nettle Family

12. NETTLE Urtica Lyallii Wats.

Description. A tall herb with coarsely toothed pointed leaves supplied with stinging hairs. Flowers very small and inconspicuous in juncture of stem and leaves along top of stem.

Habitat and Range. Shady borders along streams and in woods along the coast and in parts of the interior.

Food Uses. The young shoots as they appear early in the spring may be boiled and used as a spinach. Nettle Tea: One quart boiling water to five large handfuls of young tips; infused for several hours.

13. MOUNTAIN SORREL Oxyria digyna (L.) Camptdera.

Description. Thick rootstock; long stemmed kidney-shaped leaves. Flowers in narrow greenish flower clusters, the flat fruits turning reddish.

Habitat and Range. On mountains in most parts of the Province.

Food Uses. The young leaves form a pleasing salad either raw or cooked.

PORTULACACEAE. Purslane Family

14. BITTER ROOT Lewisia rediviva Pursh.

Description. A stout taproot topped at ground level by numerous linear leaves. Flowers large and showy, pale pink.

Habitat and Range. Dry soil of southern interior.

Food Uses. The roots peeled of the outer skin may be cooked by boiling. At one time these took a prominent place in the food of the Indians.

PORTULACACEAE. Purslane Family

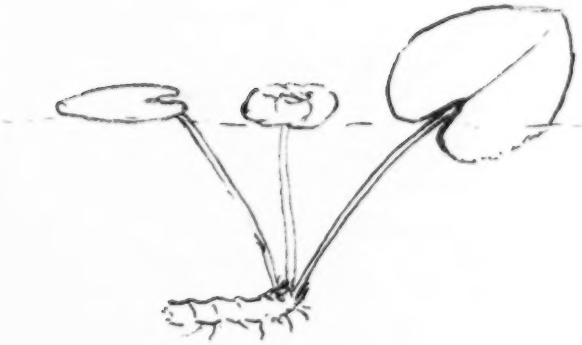
15. MINER'S LETTUCE Claytonia perfoliata (Don.) Howell.

Description. Leaves distinct or in pairs through which the stem seems to grow; succulent. Flowers small, white in loose panicle.

Habitat and Range. Damp woods and shady stream sides, chiefly in coastal belt or damp interior sections of the Province.

Food Uses. The leaves make an excellent green vegetable when cooked like spinach.

NYMPHACEAE. Water Lily Family



16. YELLOW POND LILY Nymphaea polysepala (Engelm.) Greene.

Description. Root a thick creeping underground stem. Leaves large, heartshaped. Flowers showy, yellow.

Habitat and Range. Ponds and lakes throughout the Province.

Food Uses. The ripe seeds extracted from the pods may be roasted or ground into flour or meal. Are very nutritive and palatable.

BERBERIDACEAE. Barberry Family

17. OREGON GRAPE Berberis aquifolia Pursh. and B. nervosa Pursh.

Description. Low plants with evergreen holly-like leaves. Flower yellow. Fruit blue-black.

Habitat and Range. Woods and dry hillside thickets in most parts of the Province.

Food Uses. The berries may be eaten raw or make an excellent jelly.

CHENOPODIACEAE. Goosefoot Family

18. PIGWEED OR LAMB'S QUARTERS Chenopodium album L.

Description. A tall plant. Leaves pale green with a mealy appearance beneath. Flowers small in dense elongate clusters, green and inconspicuous.

Habitat and Range. In gardens and cultivated fields everywhere.

Food Uses. The young leaves make a salad or may be cooked as greens. Could with advantage be more generally used.

CRUCIFERAE. Mustard Family

19. SHEPHERD'S PURSE. Capsella bursa-pastoris (L.) Medic.

Description. Leaves in a basal rosette. Flowers small, white in loose clusters on upper part of stem. Fruit pods triangular.

Habitat and Range. Gardens and fields all over the Province.

Food Uses. The young leaves, blanched and used as a salad are said to taste like cabbage but with a more delicate flavour.

ROSACEAE. Rose Family

20. CHOKE CHERRY Prunus demissa Nutt.

Description. Shrubs or trees. Leaves egg-shaped or oval, finely toothed. Flowers in long clusters, white. Fruit a berry, red or black.

Habitat and Range. Banks of streams and moist hillsides throughout the Province in scattered occurrence.

Food Uses. The berries are bitter and astringent unless completely ripe. Best used as a jelly combined with apples or other fruit.

ROSACEAE. Rose Family

21. CLOUD BERRY Rubus Chamaemorus L.

Description. Root creeping, leaves 2 or 3, kidney or heart-shaped with 3-7 rounded lobes. Flowers solitary. Petals white, numerous yellow stamens. Fruit at first red, finally yellow.

Habitat and Range. Peat bogs and sphagnum swamps in the mountains. North to Alaska and thence circumboreal under arctic and subarctic conditions.

Food Uses. The berry when fully ripe is juicy and pleasant to the taste.

ROSACEAE. Rose Family

22. SALMON BERRY Rubus spectabilis Pursh.

Description. A tall slender stemmed bush armed with weak prickles, leaves trifoliate, flowers solitary, red; fruit dark red or yellow.

Habitat and Range. Moist situations on streamsides or swamp borders in coastal area.

Food Uses. The berries are a well-known titbit. The young shoots peeled and eaten raw or cooked form a nutritious article of food.

23. SASKATOON BERRY Amelanchier florida Lindl.

Description. A bush or small tree. Flowers large, white, of ragged appearance. Leaves small, ovate, toothed at rounded tip. Berries black.

Habitat and Range. Roadsides and moist banks and slopes throughout the Province.

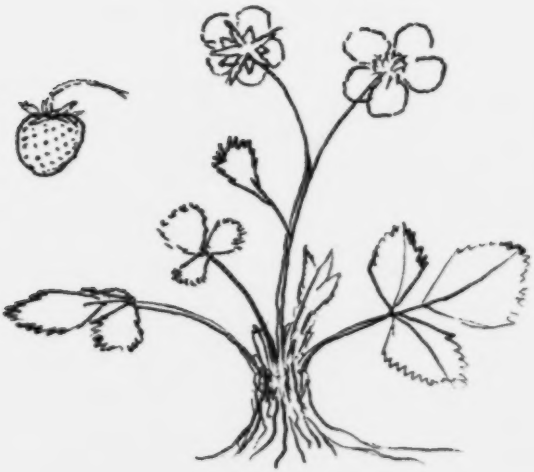
Food Uses. The berries make excellent jams and jellies or fillings for pies.

24. SILVERWEED Potentilla Anserina L.

Description. Low, stemless herb from a stout rootstock. Leaves featherlike, silvery below. Flowers, showy, bright yellow.

Habitat and Range. Moist flats near the sea and near interior lakes and marsh borders.

Food Uses. The roots are edible and wholesome. It is said that boiled or roasted they taste like parsnips.



25. STRAWBERRY Fragaria species.

Description. Stemless leaves trifoliate. Flowers white.

Habitat and Range. Dry slopes and open thickets everywhere in one or more of its several species.

Food Uses. The berries are well known as a delicious article of diet. A refreshing drink can be made of these berries by first bruising and then adding them to the water. Strawberry Tea: To 1 quart of boiling water add two large handfuls of young leaves.

26. THIMBLE BERRY Rubus parviflorus Nutt.

Description. A sprawling bush. Leaves large, lobed, more or less heart-shaped. Flowers large, white. Berry red, hemispherical.

Habitat and Range. Moist banks and swamp borders. Coast to Rockies.

Food Uses. The berries form a pleasant food either raw or as a jam or jelly. The young shoots are a tasty addition to the larder.

ROSACEAE. Rose Family

27. TRAILING BLACKBERRY Rubus macropetalus Dougl.

Description. Short trailing stem armed with sharp thorns. Leaves short-hairy, trifoliate. Flowers numerous, white; berries black.

Habitat and Range. Thickets and waste places throughout the Province.

Food Uses. The berries may be used either raw or as jams and jellies. Water to which the mashed berries have been added make a pleasant drink. The leaves may be used as a tea substitute.

ROSACEAE. Rose Family

28. WILD ROSE. Rosa nutkana Presl. and other species.

Description. Usually thorny stemmed bushes. Leaves odd pinnate; flowers large, of varying shades of pink, very showy. Fruit conspicuous, scarlet, berry-like.

Food Uses. The fruit or "hips" when ripe make excellent jelly or marmalade. One method for making marmalade is as follows: To 1 pound of "hips" add 1/2 pint of water, boil till tender, pass pulp through sieve, mix in 1 pound sugar to 1 pound pulp and boil again until it jells.

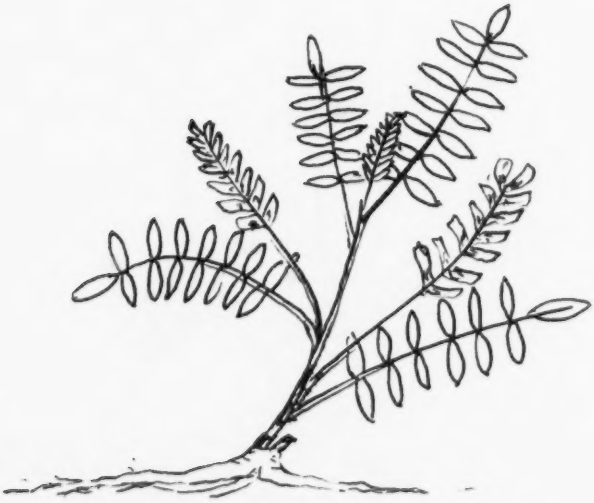
29. CLOVER Trifolium species.

Description. Low herbs, leaves consisting of 3 leaflets. Flowers in dense head, white, yellow or red.

Habitat and Range. Meadow and bluffs everywhere.

Food Uses. The roots are said to be sweet and pleasant. They may be partially dried and smoked, or rolled and dipped in oil. The leaves were used by Indians as a salad.

LEGUMINOSEAE. Pea Family



30. WILD LICORICE. Glycorrhiza lepidota Nutt.

Description. Roots, large. Leaves divided into a number of leaflets. Flowers in dense spikes, yellowish white.

Habitat and Range. Southern British Columbia.

Food Uses. The long fleshy roots are sweet and were much used by the Indians.

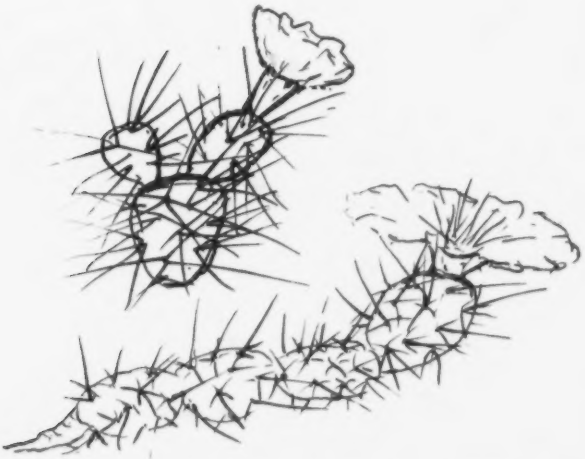
EMPETRACEAE. Crowberry Family

31. CROWBERRY Empetrum nigrum L.

Description. Low creeping plant. Leaves small leathery, oblong and shining. Flowers small, pink. Fruit, black berries.

Habitat and Range. Swamps and rocky land in mountains and northern districts.

Food Uses. The berries are sweet and juicy.



32. CACTUS Opuntia polycantha Haw. and O. fragilis Haw.

Description. Fleshy, pale green nodule-like stems, armed with needle-like spines. Flowers large, yellow.

Habitat and Range. Common in the dry interior of the Province and in isolated rocky localities on the coast.

Food Uses. The young fleshy joints may be roasted, boiled or fried, after first removing the spines by burning or by slicing off spines and outer coat at one operation.

33. BUFFALO BERRY. Shepherdia canadensis Nutt.

Description. Small shrub. Leaves elliptical with rusty scales beneath. Flowers small, at juncture of stem and leaves, yellow. Berries red or orange.

Habitat and Range. Dry slopes. Vancouver Island and dry interior.

Food Uses. The berries when beaten up with an egg beater and mixed with a little sugar, froth up into a salmon-coloured mass both tasty and nutritious. From the froth-forming character of the berry the name Soap Berry is often applied to this species. Known also as Soopolallie.

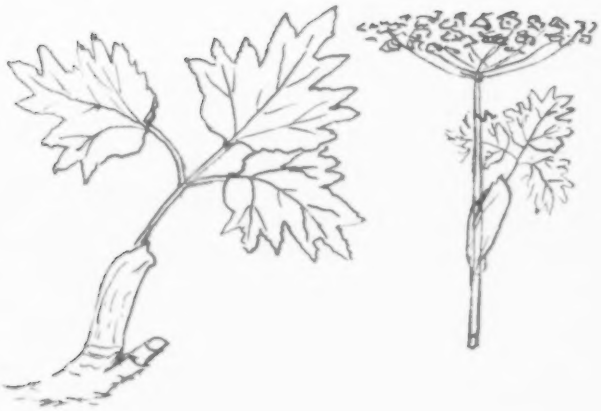
ONAGRACEAE. Evening Primrose Family

34. FIRE WEED. Epilobium angustifolium L.

Description. Tall spire-like herb, leaves sword-shaped; flowers in terminal spikes of showy pink bloom.

Habitat and Range. Moist banks and burnt over areas throughout the Province.

Food Uses. The young leaves can be used as greens. The stalk when split open exposes a sweet though glutinous substance which is said to be quite palatable. The dried leaves may be used as a beverage.



35. COW PARSNIP. Heracleum lanatum Mich.

Description. Tall stout perennial. Leaves large, deeply lobed, much inflated base of leaf-stalk. Flowers small, white, in large flat topped umbrella-like structures.

Habitat and Range. Moist banks and woods throughout the Province.

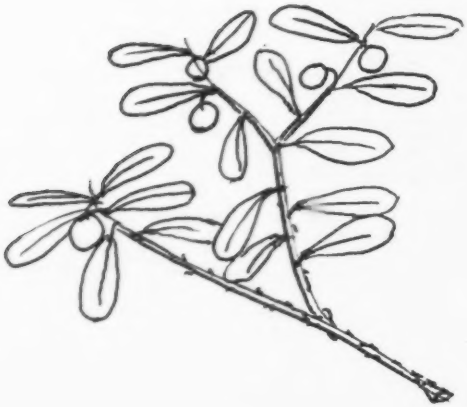
Food Uses. The flower stems before the flowers open may be peeled and the inner portion eaten green or they may be cut up into pieces like rhubarb and boiled until tender, changing the first water.

36. WILD CARAWAY or PIGNUT Carum Gairdneri Gray.

Description. Tall and slender. Leaves soon withering. Basal leaves divided into several leaflets, stem leaves sword-shaped. Flowers in small umbrella-like heads.

Habitat and Range. Thickets and dry open places.

Food Uses. The spindle-shaped roots may be roasted, forming a palatable food. They are excellent when fried in butter.



37. BEARBERRY. Arctostaphylos uva-ursi Spreng.

Description. Forming low dense mat-like growth. Leaves egg-shaped with small end nearest stem, thick, evergreen. Flowers pink. Berries red.

Habitat and Range. Dry slopes among rocks throughout the Province.

Food Uses. The berries though dry and tasteless were a common food of the Indians.

38. HUCKLEBERRY Vaccinium parvifolium Smith

Description. A small bush with green stem. Leaves small, thin. Flowers pink or reddish. Fruit bright red.

Habitat and Range. Open woods in the coastal area.

Food Uses. The berries are a well-known article of food, very delicious in whatever way prepared—raw, in pies, jellies, etc.

Huckleberries, cranberries and bilberries which abound in nearly all parts of the Province are valuable food resources and are well-known to nearly everybody.

39. LABRADOR TEA Ledum groenlandicum Oeder.

Description. Small evergreen shrub. Leaves oblong, edges rolled in toward the underside. Flowers white in terminal umbrella-like formation. Leaves rusty-hairy beneath.

Habitat and Range. Bogs throughout the Province.

Food Uses. The leaves may be used as a tea substitute. If steeped in one or two changes of boiling water the pungent aromatic taste will be much reduced. It is said to have narcotic properties so that care should be used by the unaccustomed.

In the reputedly poisonous Ledum glandulosum Bong., the undersides of the leaves are pale and resinous dotted and the margins are not rolled in. It occurs in mountainous districts east of the Cascades.

ERICACEAE. Heath Family

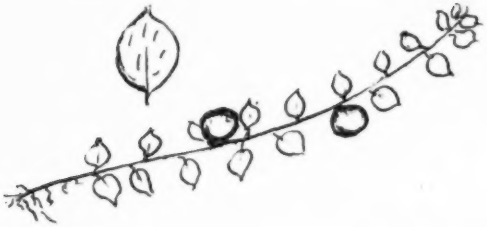
40. SALAL Gaultheria shallon Pursh.

Description. Stout wiry stemmed shrub. Leaves, egg-shaped, oblong, large and leathery. Flowers in terminal clusters, whitish pink. Berries black.

Habitat and Range. A dense under shrub of the Douglas Fir woods along the coast.

Food Uses. The berries were formerly a substantial food of the Indians who made them into a syrup, ate them raw, or dried them into cakes which were stored for future consumption.

ERICACEAE. Heath Family



41. SNOWBERRY Chiogenes hispidula (L.) T. & G.

Description. Very small, trailing plant closely adhering to the ground. Leaves small, arranged in pairs, whitish on underside with a few large black hairs. Flowers small, white, bell-shaped, singly at juncture of leaves with stem. Berries white. Not to be confused with the waxberry of the coastal and inland districts at lower levels which is also sometimes called Snowberry. This is of a dense bushy nature, the berries of which are white, very bitter and unpalatable and are said to be poisonous if eaten in quantity.

Habitat and Range. Peat bogs and mossy woods. Rockies and northward.

Food Uses. The berries are slightly acid with a delicate flavour of wintergreen. The leaves are said to make an excellent tea. Thoreau claimed it to be the best of any of the native herbs he used for that purpose.

LABIATAE. Mint Family

42. YERBA BUENA Micromeria Douglasii Benth.

Description. Small trailing plant. Leaves in pairs, round, slightly toothed on margin. Flowers small, white, at juncture of stem and leaves.

Habitat and Range. Dry woods, southern British Columbia.

Food Uses. The leaves dried and steeped in boiling water make an agreeable beverage.

43. PLANTAIN Plantago major L.

Description. Low stemless herb. Leaves broadly elliptical, ribbed strongly. Flowers in long compact clusters; individual flowers very small, greenish.

Habitat and Range. Dry roadsides, fields and waste places everywhere.

Food Uses. The leaves were formerly used as a pot herb and as a green vegetable. Two large handfuls of the leaves infused for several hours in one quart of boiling water may be used in place of tea.

CAPRIFOLIACEAE. Honeysuckle Family

44. ELDER Sambucus glauca Nutt.

Description. Shrub or tree. Leaves divided into leaflets; leaflets smooth with toothed edges. Flowers, a flat topped group of small white flowers. Berries black.

Habitat and Range. Valleys and stream borders in open situations. Coast and eastwards.

Food Uses. Berries may be boiled; raw berries steeped in water make a refreshing drink. Berries also used for pies and jellies. The red-berried Elder has an unpleasant taste although otherwise harmless.

45. SQUASHBERRY Viburnum pauciflorum Raf.

Description. Small bush. Leaves three-lobed, toothed. Flowers white in flat topped umbrella-like formation. Berries red.

Habitat and Range. Valleys and stream banks along the coast northward.

Food Uses. The berries make an excellent jelly or cooked as a sauce are equal to the cranberry of the swamps.

46. TWIN BERRY Lonicera involucratum Benth.

Description. Tall bush. Leaves opposite, elliptical, pointed. Flowers in pairs, yellow. Berries black in pairs.

Habitat and Range. Damp thickets through central and southern British Columbia.

Food Uses. The ripe berries are edible but are not especially palatable.

COMPOSITAE. Composite Family

47. <u>BALSAM ROOT</u> Balsamorrhiza deltoidea Nutt. and B. sagittata Nutt.

Description. Low herb with thick roots and large basal leaves. Heads very large. Yellow.

Habitat and Range. Dry slopes, southern British Columbia.

Food Uses. The ripe seed may be pounded into a meal. It is stated to be quite palatable. The whole seed may also be eaten in its natural state without any preparation. The fleshy roots when roasted are said to be sweet and pleasant to the taste.

48. CHICORY Cichorium Intybus L.

Description. Tall herb from stout tap root. Leaves of two kinds: basal, long and narrow and coarsely toothed as in the Dandelion; stem leaves similar, but without teeth. Flowers large, bright blue.

Habitat and Range. Roadsides and waste places throughout the Province.

Food Uses. The basal leaves blanched in early spring make a tasty salad. If picked green they should be boiled in several changes of water to remove bitterness, then prepare as for spinach. The roots dried and ground make an excellent coffee substitute.

COMPOSITAE. Composite Family.

49. DANDELION Taraxacum officinale L.

Description. Stemless herb from a thick tap root. Leaves coarsely toothed, terminal lobe large. Flowers yellow on hollow stalk.

Habitat and Range. A weed pest everywhere in field, garden and roadsides.

Food Uses. The young leaves may be used in a salad or cooked as greens. In cooking, change the water to remove bitterness. The roots sliced have also been used as an ingredient in salads. When dried, roasted and ground the roots may be used as a beverage and are well known as a substitute for coffee. Roots are best dug in the fall.

COMPOSITAE. Composite Family.

50. EDIBLE THISTLE Carduus edulis Greene.

Description. Tall biennial. Leaves green above, white downy beneath. Heads in cluster, flowers red.

Habitat and Range. Coast and also in southern interior.

Food Uses. The roots are a useful source of food. When roasted the resulting product is very sweet and sugary. Boiled as a vegetable they are tender but not especially appetizing.

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